

accomplished, and is showing a certain amount of feeling of frustration and yet showing confidence that God is going to accomplish the work for which he has sent him.

The difficulty with this view is the fact that chapter 42, our first lengthy description of the servant, laid so much stress upon his lack of frustration, and so emphasized his constant and unwavering confidence in God, and certainty that the work would be carried through, so great a certainty that it was never necessary for him to raise his voice, or to use violent measures. Since this is the description of the servant given in chapter 42, it seems rather unlikely that there would be an apparent contradiction to it with a seeming feeling of frustration ~~he~~ on his part here in verse 4. The other possibility which would avoid this difficulty is to assume that in verse 4, it is Israel as a personified nation, who speaks, rather than the actual servant of the Lord. Israel said I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for naught and in vain. Israel looks back over its history, and sees how little has been accomplished as far as bringing light to the Gentiles, and ~~judgment~~ ~~judgment~~ to the end of the world is concerned. Israel sees itself in exile, in oppression, in difficulty. How can Israel ever carry out the work which is assigned to the servant of the Lord, And yet Israel says God has promised the work will be done, we can depend upon it that it will.

This latter interpretation supposes a change of speaker, in verse 4, different from the rest of verse 1 and 6, which contain the servant's soliloquy. This is a bit strange but hardly unique in Scripture. It is altogether possible that this is the correct interpretation, and yet it may be that the other interpretation is the true one. If it is then we would have to say that chapter 42 expressed the real nature of the servant's attitude and of his activity, and that verse 4 here expressed not so much his feeling as the way it appeared to others, as if his strength had been spent for naught, and nothing had been accomplished. Jesus preached for three years and at the end had less disciples than in the early part of his ministry. Many people left him, he turned to the 12 whom he had